

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5002

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 16646

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, OEXC, JA

SUBJ: LABOR EXCHANGE: REQUEST FOR AMERICAN SPECIALIST FROM
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

REF: A) TOKYO 15819 (NOTAL): B) STATE 251715 (NOTAL)

1. UPON FURTHER REFLECTION WE BELIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES IN CULTIVATING TIES WITH POWERFUL BUT HITHERTO UNAPPROACHABLE SOHYO AFFILIATED 618,000 MEMBER TEACHERS' UNION (NIKKYOSO) WOULD BEST BE SERVED BY EXTENDED VISIT UNDER SPECIALIST PROGRAM OF AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS (AFT) STAFF OFFICIAL WITH GOOD GRASP NOT ONLY OF UNION AFFAIRS BUT OF AMERICAN POLITICAL SCENE AND US FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES AS WELL. IF STAFF LEVEL VISIT SUCCESSFUL, IT COULD BE FOLLOWED UP, AFTER APPROPRIATE INTERLUDE, BY SUBSEQUENT VISIT OF AFT PRESIDENT SHANKER OR OTHER TOP AFT OFFICER.

2. SHANKER'S 1974 VISIT TO JAPAN, INCLUDING CALL ON NIKKYOSO HQTRS, AWAKENED INTEREST OF NIKKYOSO TOP LEADERSHIP IN DEVELOPING TIES WITH US COUNTER-PARTS. SINCE SHANKER'S VISIT, SEVERAL DEVELOPMENTS HAVE IF ANYTHING INCREASED NIKKYOSO RECEPTIVITY TO CLOSER LINKS WITH AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT AND PARTICULARLY US TEACHERS ORGANIZATIONS. POST-VIETNAM MOOD IN JAPAN, WITH ITS EMPHASIS ON IMPORTANCE TO

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JAPANESE OF RELATIONSHIP WITH US, HAS CLEARLY

PERMEATED THE NON-COMMUNIST LEFT HERE. ALSO SIGNIFICANT WERE SUCCESSFUL US VISIT THIS SPRING OF DIRECTOR OF NIKKYOSO'S ORGANIZATION DEPT, KEIICHI KANEKO, AND SHANKER'S SEPT MEETING IN NEW YORK WITH JAPAN SOCIALIST PARTY LEADERS. IN ADDITION BATTLE ROYAL WITHIN NIKKYOSO BETWEEN SOCIALIST LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNIST "INSURGENTS" HAS LED NIKKYOSO PRES MAKIEDA (WHO IS CLOSE TO JSP) TO SEEK INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR HIS POLICIES FROM WESTERN LABOR UNIONS. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT TIME HAS NEVER BEEN BETTER TO CAPITALIZE ON THIS RESURGENCE OF INTEREST ON NIKKYOSO'S PART.

3. AS DEPT AWARE, INVITATION TO NIKKYOSO TEAM TO VISIT US IS ONE OF HIGHEST PRIORITY OBJECTIVES IN THIS YEAR'S LABOR EXCHANGE PROGRAM. SO FAR, HOWEVER, WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN FIRM COMMITMENT FROM NIKKYOSO HQTRS ABOUT COMPOSITION OF TEAM. VISIT OF AFT REP SOMETIME DURING FIRST HALF OF NEXT YEAR HOPEFULLY WOULD GIVE MOMENTUM TO OUR RECRUITING EFFORTS.

4. THIS MESSAGE BEING INFOED TO CANBERRA, MELBOURNE AND WELLINGTON ON ASSUMPTION THEY MAY ALSO BE INTERESTED IN PROGRAMMING AFT REP IF HE SHOULD VISIT EAST ASIA ON REGIONAL GRANT. IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, THAT VISIT OF AFT OFFICIAL TO JAPAN BE AT LEAST TWO WEEKS IN LENGTH SO THAT HE CAN BE PROGRAMMED WITH OTHER GROUPS IN ADDITION TO NIKKYOSO.
HODGSON

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